

## Are You a Member of ‘The Church of the Church’?

Americans, in general, do not know much about royalty, at least not from personal experience. So, I’m not sure how it sounds to you that a royal prince would dethrone his father to assume power as king. It is not necessarily unheard of, but that is not how things are supposed to go.

Yet, it just so happened that the most beloved king of Israel was temporarily dethroned by one of his sons. King David angered his son Absalom when he took no action to bring justice in a sinful situation involving Absalom’s blood sister. From that point forward, Absalom, his son, was filled with anger and hatred toward David.

When it was clear to King David that Absalom had won the favor of Israel, he fled Jerusalem to save his family and the people of the city. Then Absalom and his followers entered Jerusalem and he assumed the throne.

Absalom immediately asked, “Give your advice. What shall we do?” He was advised to send an army in pursuit of his father. He was assured that there would be peace in the land when the army returned victorious.

### **So the plan pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel. (2 Samuel 17:4)**

How does that strike you? Did you know that Absalom’s chief advisor was also King David’s chief advisor? Had the elders of Israel not been among those who cheered the victories of King David as he defeated Israel’s enemies?

It is true that Absalom had been manipulative, but it *pleased the people* to dethrone David and set Absalom in his place.

- ◆ Absalom was not God’s anointed.
- ◆ His chief advisor did not consult with God.
- ◆ A sympathizer of King Saul mocked King David as he fled Jerusalem saying that God was behind it all. Yet, God was not.

When people rule God’s people, things always go very badly. Whether it was God’s chosen people in the Old Testament, Israel, or God’s chosen people today, the church, God is the true ruler of His people. The *church of God* must never be ruled by *the church* (the people).

God used men as prophets, priests, and kings to lead his people. Yet, Moses led by the voice and will of God. Gideon would not allow the people to make him king. David always consulted God. Even when God first allowed a king over Israel, He knew that Israel had rejected Him as King!

In the ‘new Israel,’ God’s church today, He has provided roles of leadership: elders, deacons, preachers and teachers. However, Jesus Christ is the Head of the church and there is none other (Colossians 2:8-10). Even the great Apostle Peter referred to himself as a ‘fellow elder’ and Jesus as the ‘Chief Shepherd.’ (1 Peter 5:1, 4)

Many voices in God’s church today advocate change. Others are ready to fight to preserve the *old ways*. Who is right? Does it matter?

Whenever you hear voices promoting change which mirrors changes in American society, is that from God or man? If the majority voice insists on no change, but only to appease, is that from God or man? The church of God is a monarchy with Christ as King. We please the King.

Near the beginning of the Book of Revelation Jesus rebuked a church for being too conservative, for lacking love (2:1-7). He rebuked another church for being too tolerant (progressive) (2:18-29). What would he say to our congregation? Is this congregation just another self-ruled, *please-the-people* ‘Church of the Church’? The only way to answer is with an open Bible! What is *the church*? Open the Book! Read...Think!